

M72-135694M/SW
Amendment dated 11/16/2004

09/941,620

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Reply to office action mailed 08/17/2004

REMARKS

Claims 2-17 are currently pending in the application. By this amendment, claim 2 is amended and claim 18 is added for the Examiner's consideration. The foregoing separate sheets marked as "Listing of Claims" shows all the claims in the application, with an indication of the current status of each .

The Examiner's indication that claims 4-6 contain allowable subject matter is acknowledged with appreciation.

The Examiner has rejected claims 2-3, 7-11, and 13-14 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,055,592 to Smith in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,559,672 to Buras, Jr. et al. ("Buras"). Smith discloses a mouse system for authenticating a user via a smart card inserted into the mouse pointing device. In the prior art, as viewed by Smith, smart cards containing tokens for authenticating a user were read into a computer via a card reader. Smith provided for reading smart card authenticating tokens via the existing interface port for the mouse pointing device, by integrating a card reader into the mouse and converting the authenticating tokens into pointing device codes.

By contrast, the present invention uses a mouse connection to provide an auxiliary storage medium (such as a flash card or a memory stick) to a personal computer, without requiring an additional interface device. The purpose of providing an auxiliary storage medium for the computer is nowhere present in Smith. Instead, the smart card as disclosed in Smith stores authenticating tokens to be read into the computer to validate the user. There is no suggestion in Smith of having the smart card serve as an auxiliary storage medium for the computer, writable as well as readable in accordance with the practice of computer storage devices. The claims have been amended to clarify this aspect of the invention, in combination with the aspects of providing the computer with access to a removable storage device through an existing interface not otherwise usable for removable data storage devices.

Another aspect of the invention is a door member that is part of the outer face of the casing body when closed. The door prevents dust from entering (page 3, lines

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17-18), but also prevents the storage medium from deteriorating the operability of the mouse by protruding from the outer face of the casing body during use of the mouse (page 3, lines 18-20). The Examiner argues that Buras teaches a door apparatus that substantially covers the memory card aperture, thereby preventing dust from entering. However, the Buras disclosure regards a computer while Smith regards a mouse controller, so it is impossible to combine Buras with Smith. Furthermore, it is evident from Buras that the door covers the aperture only when the memory card is not inserted; when the memory card is inserted, the outer end of the card remains exposed and the aperture is not covered (as shown in Fig. 2 of Buras). Nor is the door member a part of the outer face of the casing body when the storage medium is inserted and operable within the mouse. The claims have been amended to clarify this aspect of the invention.

As amended, it is believed that claim 2 and its dependent claims, including new claim 18, are in allowable form.

It should also be noted that the pair of door members in Buras do not pivot in the manner described for the present invention. In the present invention, the door members pivot laterally, that is, to the left (and right) about a vertical axis. In Buras, the pair of door members pivot inward about a horizontal axis. Although Buras does not disclose a second door member, it will be observed that the second door member pivots upward (i.e. vertically) so as to expose the aperture and downward (also vertically) to cover the aperture.

The Examiner has rejected claims 15-17 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Smith in view of Buras and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,198,473 to Armstrong. Armstrong discloses the use of wireless, USB and PS/2 connections between the mouse and the computer. These varieties of connectivity are well known in the art. However, claims 15-17 depend from claim 2, which is believed to be in allowable form and therefore claims 15-17 are also allowable.

The Examiner has rejected claim 12 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Smith in view of Buras and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,807,749 to Ackeret. Ackeret discloses a moveable slider member for temporary

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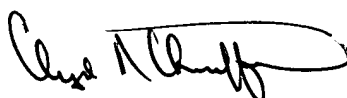
storage of recording media. There is no suggestion in Akeret that the recording media is to be used for either reading or writing data while inserted in the storage compartment. However, in any event, claim 12 is ultimately dependent upon claim 2, which is believed to be in allowable form, and therefore claim 12 is also allowable.

In view of the foregoing, it is requested that the application be reconsidered, that claims 2-17 be allowed, and that the application be passed to issue.

Should the Examiner find the application to be other than in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned at 703-787-9400 (fax: 703-787-7557; email: clyde@wcc-ip.com) to discuss any other changes deemed necessary in a telephonic or personal interview.

If an extension of time is required for this response to be considered as being timely filed, a conditional petition is hereby made for such extension of time. Please charge any deficiencies in fees and credit any overpayment of fees to Attorney's Deposit Account No. 50-2041.

Respectfully submitted,



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